

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**  
**U.S. EMBASSY, Yerevan**  
**Notice of Funding Opportunity**

<b>Funding Opportunity Title:</b>	<i>U.S. Alumni Outreach Small Grants Program Competition</i>
<b>Funding Opportunity Number:</b>	<i>Alumni-FY20-01</i>
<b>Deadline for Applications:</b>	<i>February 13, 2020</i>
<b>CFDA Number:</b>	<i>19.900</i>
<b>Total Amount Available:</b>	<i>Up to \$100,000 pending the availability of funds</i>

**A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The U.S. Embassy Yerevan, of the U.S. Department of State, announces the U.S. Alumni Outreach Grants Program competition for fiscal year 2020, aiming to maintain contacts with U.S. Government-funded exchange program alumni and to encourage networking among alumni and their colleagues in fields that promote democratic advancement, civic education, association building, youth empowerment, and economic reform.

Individual alumni of all U.S. Government (USG)-funded exchange programs (including ECA, USAID and USDA supported programs) as well as Armenian-registered NGOs (non-profit, non-governmental organization) that have USG alumni members are eligible to apply for funding.

**Program Objectives:**

The United States Embassy in Yerevan, Armenia, is pleased to announce the 2020 U.S. Alumni Outreach Small Grants Program competition. The program supports initiatives that promote democratic advancement, civic education, association building, youth empowerment, and economic reform. Program funds can be used for the following purposes:

- Support initiatives aimed at promoting democratic institutions as well as enhancing the protection of human rights;
- Enhance cooperation among USG alumni, civil society, and the general public to eliminate corruption;
- Assist efforts to promote association building, alumni networking and civic engagement;
- Extend development and empowerment opportunities for youth from the regions of Armenia;
- Develop independent and diverse media in Armenia, strengthen investigative journalism and counter the dissemination of disinformation; and
- Enhance economic development, spur the startup community and entrepreneurial activities in Armenia.

Grants should be used to carry out specific, concrete projects with measurable and realistic results. Project proposals should describe specific objectives, outcomes, and intended audiences, and should include a starting and ending date of the project that do not exceed twelve months. We

encourage networking among alumni and cooperative projects between partnering NGOs. Involving the regions of Armenia in an aspect of the program is strongly encouraged.

### **Participants and Audiences:**

Please be specific when mentioning the target audience(s) of your proposed project, including demographic information and the approximate number of beneficiaries to be directly and indirectly impacted by project activities

## **B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

Length of performance period:	<i>up to 12 months</i>
Number of awards anticipated:	<i>up to 10 awards (depending on award budgets)</i>
Award Ceiling:	<i>\$5,000 for individual grants and \$10,000 for awards to NGOs</i>
Total available funding:	<i>Up to \$100,000</i>
Type of Funding:	<i>FY19/20 Assistance to Europe, Eurasia and Central Asia under the Foreign Assistance Act</i>
Anticipated program start date:	<i>June 1, 2020</i>

**NOTE:** This notice is subject to availability of funding.

### **Funding Instrument Type:**

The type of funding instrument, exact amount of funding, the scope of work, and the terms and conditions of a successful award will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the applicant and U.S. Embassy representatives after the application has been selected for funding.

The funding instrument will be either a grant or a cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements will be used only for awards to organizations in case the proposed project involves substantial U.S. Embassy involvement. “Substantial involvement” means that, after the award is approved for funding, U.S. Embassy staff will assist, guide, coordinate, or participate in project activities in a partnership role. The U.S. Embassy will not assume direction, primary responsibility, or a dominant role in project activities. These reside with the recipient for the project as a whole.

## **C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

1. Eligible Applicants: The following entities are eligible to apply:

- Alumni of all U.S. Government (USG)-funded exchange programs that are residents of Armenia;
- Armenian-registered not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations, that have USG alumni members;
- Independent media outlets registered in Armenia that have USG alumni members.

Please note that American and third-country organizations and individuals are not eligible to apply. In case of institutional applicants, the representative(s) of the USG Alumni community need to have substantial involvement in the management/activities of the project.

## 2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is encouraged but not required. Matching is not required.

## 3. Other Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a unique entity identifier (Data Universal Numbering System/DUNS number from Dun & Bradstreet), as well as a valid registration on [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov). Individuals are not required to have a unique entity identifier or be registered in SAM.gov.

If applicant organizations do not have DUNS number at the time of application, they can write the following combination of numbers in answer to the question #8c “123456787” in the online application. However, successful organizations will need to obtain DUNS number and register in [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) to be eligible to receive an award from the Department of State following the three below-mentioned steps:

Step 1: Apply for a DUNS number: Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet. If your organization does not have an assigned code already, you may obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or visiting <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>.

Step 2: NCAGE application: You can submit an application for NCAGE code following this link: <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx>. You can find instructions for the NCAGE application process here: <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/Docs/US%20Instructions%20for%20NSPA%20NCAGE.pdf>

Applicants can call 1-269-961-7766 or e-mail to [NCAGE@dlis.dla.mil](mailto:NCAGE@dlis.dla.mil) for any problems encountered in getting an NCAGE code.

Step 3: After receiving the NCAGE Code, proceed to register in SAM.gov by logging onto: <http://www.sam.gov>. SAM registration must be renewed annually.

Registration in the mentioned systems is free of charge.

## **D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **1. Application**

All applications must be written in English and submitted by February 13, 2020, 18:00 local (Armenian) time using the application portal available at the following links:

For individuals: <https://bit.ly/38HQ1Io>

For organizations: <https://bit.ly/35i6fpx>

Only applications submitted before the deadline will be considered for funding. After submitting the application electronically, the portal will notify the applicants about their successful submission.

### **2. Content and Form of Application Submission:**

Applications received after the deadline of February 13, 2020, will not be reviewed. Applications lacking any of the required elements, or which do not follow the instructions listed in this funding announcement, will be deemed ineligible.

#### **Content of Applications:**

The following application documents are **required**:

- The official application forms available under the links mentioned in the first paragraph of this section
- SF424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs) and SF-424B (Assurances for Non-construction Programs) forms appended at the end of the online application. Please download the forms, fill them out and upload the filled-out versions using the application portal.
- Detailed budget and budget narrative presented in a clear and understandable format and uploaded in the respective fields in the online application portal. See section H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions below for further information.

#### **Please ensure that:**

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
- All documents are in English (except for the organizational charter and the registration certificate of Armenian NGOs)
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars

### **3. Attachments:**

The following documents can be attached to the application:

- One-page CV of the USG Alumni and the key personnel of the project (required);
- Official registration documents (required for organizations);
- Letters of support from program partners (if any) describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner;
- Official permission letters, if required for program activities
- Other materials that the applicant feels are necessary for the accurate evaluation of the project proposal (recommendation letters, project materials, brochures etc.)

#### 4. **Funding Restrictions:**

The funds requested under this program CANNOT fund partisan political activity; humanitarian aid and charities or charitable activities; scientific research; fundraising campaigns; commercial projects; trade activities; conferences and individual trips abroad; projects aimed primarily at the institutional development of the recipient organization. Please note that award funds cannot be used to purchase alcoholic beverages.

Please visit the U.S. Embassy Yerevan website for more specific information about the grant NOFO: <https://www.usa.am/cms/announcements.php> .

## **E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

### **1. Evaluation Criteria**

Each application will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below.

Proposals will be evaluated according to the project's relevance to the Alumni Outreach Small Grants Program goals; the extent to which the project has clearly formulated objectives, target groups, and expected outcomes; and the ability of the applicant to carry out the project aims.

**Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea – (25) points:** The program idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

**Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – (30) points:** Goals and objectives are clearly stated and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

**Budget – (10) points:** The budget justification is detailed. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities.

**Expected Results and Project's Sustainability – (20 points):** Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program. Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure program success against key indicators and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The program includes output and outcome indicators, and shows how and when those will be measured.

**Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – (15 points):** The applicant has expertise in its stated field and has the internal controls in place to manage federal funds.

The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses. Each criterion includes factors reviewers will consider to determine how well an application meets that criterion. Reviewers must provide comments to justify the scores they provide for each criterion. Applications that best address these criteria will be the most competitive.

## **2. Review and Selection Process**

A Grants Review Committee will evaluate all eligible applications. Reviewers' final scores will be combined and averaged to produce a final rank order of the proposals for each panel/priority. Final approvals from responsible offices at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, DC, need to be obtained before the grants are signed.

## **F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **1. Federal Award Notices**

The grant award or cooperative agreement will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. The recipient may only start incurring program expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document signed by the Grants Officer.

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the Department of State.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. Government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

### **2. Payment Method**

Payments will, in general, be made in two segments. An initial segment will be authorized to initiate the project. The applicant must provide an interim report about the use of the first segment of funds before the second segment is released.

## 1. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

**Terms and Conditions:** Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, Certifications and Assurances, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, all of which are available at:

<https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/pages/home.aspx>

Note the U.S Flag branding and marking requirements in the Standard Terms and Conditions.

## 3. Reporting

**Reporting Requirements:** Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted. All recipients must submit a formal report to the Grants Officer upon completion of the project. The report should discuss what was done, whether the project was successful from the applicant's perspective and how it might be improved in the future. Copies of video materials, CDs and other video and audio aids generated during the implementation of the project attesting to the success of the grant activities are welcome, and sometimes required indeed. An accounting of the use of the grant funds must also be included.

## G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact Andranik Manukyan at [manukyana@state.gov](mailto:manukyana@state.gov).

The U.S. Embassy will be holding informative presentations for alumni and local NGOs throughout Armenia to provide additional information and details about the U.S. Alumni Outreach Grants Program Competition. Presentation dates and locations will be shared on the official Facebook page of the [U.S. Embassy Yerevan](#).

## H. OTHER INFORMATION

### Guidelines for Budget Justification:

Grants may not cover the following costs:

1. Social welfare projects;
2. Capital improvements;
3. Purchase of furniture and office decorations;
4. Purchase of vehicles;
5. Projects that contain the appearance of partisanship/support for electoral campaigns;
6. Academic or analytical research (if not part of a larger project);
7. Scholarships;
8. Paying the costs of international participants/guest speakers at events;
9. Medical and psychological research, and clinical studies;

10. Provision of health care services;
11. Projects of a commercial nature;
12. Entertainment costs (social activities, ceremonies, alcoholic beverages, cocktail parties, guided tours).

### **Budget guidelines**

In order to be sure that the Review Panel understands why there is a need for funding, the applicant should **prepare a line-by-line, detailed list of expenses** that is envisioned for this project. Budgets should be submitted in U.S. dollars. The budget should be prepared in a logical manner and offer enough detail that a reviewer will be able to understand exactly what the figures mean and how that figure was determined.

The proposal should also include a narrative text statement that explains very precisely the proposed budget so that members of the Panel will understand exactly how the money would be spent. The budget narrative should follow the actual budget presentation itself and describe in detail the costs presented in the budget. In other words, the narrative explains, line by line, what the numbers mean and how they were determined.

“Cost Sharing” refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Embassy. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers’ time and donated venues.

**Program Expenses** should cover costs for the project activities. They may include preparation or acquisition of literature or educational materials; honoraria to specialists or associates; expenses for seminars or conferences (speaker’s fee, preparation of materials and room rental), etc.

If the proposal seeks funding to purchase items/services with any single item exceeding \$1,000 in cost, the application must include three pro-forma estimates from different vendors stipulating the market price of the desired item.

**Salaries** should be paid only to the people who will have a direct and specific involvement in the project which is not otherwise within the regular scope of their duties and who will spend a majority of their time on the project. Salaries should not be requested for the ongoing, operational job remuneration of the organization staff. The salary should be calculated on the total number of hours worked for the duration of the project (the percentage of the person’s monthly involvement with the project is the preferable calculation formula). Salary levels should be reasonable and no higher than other local salaries. Please bear in mind that the total amount of salaries to be funded should not exceed 20% of the total budget.

**Equipment** refers to the following: computers, copying machines, printers or other technical devices necessary for the fulfillment of the project the unit price of which exceeds \$5,000. Other equipment proposed for purchase that is not critical to the fulfillment of the project will be excluded (for example, the purchase of a computer for organizing a conference is not a justified



expense). Remember that renting equipment for the short-term project activities is often preferable to the Panel than an outright purchase.

The use of “miscellaneous expenses” as a budget item is unacceptable.

**Meals** not integral to a program event are not acceptable grant expenses. An effort should be made to secure funding from other sources for food costs. When these costs cannot be supported otherwise, they should be clearly justified and limited to a maximum of 10% of the total award amount. This includes expenses associated with individual per diems for grant-related activities.

**Entertainment Costs**, including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any associated costs are unallowable, except where specific costs that might otherwise be considered entertainment have a programmatic purpose and are authorized either in the approved budget for the award or with prior written approval of the U.S. Embassy Grants Officer.

### **Other information:**

Grants for publication of materials should describe the intended audience, content, and how materials will be distributed. Grants for seminars/workshops should describe the expected audience, content, and timeframe. If a seminar or a training workshop is proposed in the application, it should also contain the attachments of the training materials that will be used for the training.

### **Recommendations:**

Please do not send the application before you:

- Read this document once more, and make sure you understand the guidelines and that your proposal fits the purposes of the program.
- Carefully review the application to make sure it is complete and free of errors.
- Ask someone who does not know anything about your project to read your proposal to determine if it is understandable, and if the provided information is comprehensive enough.
- Ask someone with experience applying for grants to look at the application and provide advice on improving it.
- Make sure the application is neatly typed and easy to read in English. Perfect English is not required but the proposal must be understandable to an English speaker.